

Dutch Christian Democrats oppose
deal with anti-Islam party pg 2

Firefighters struggle in
vain in Russian pg 2

Rains bring new misery
to China pg 2

FREE COPY

Friday, August 13, 2010

THE MORNING NEWS

Your Source for Local News in English

www.themorningnewsaruba.com

Caya G. F. Betico Croes 111 - Tel: 588-9517 - Fax: 588-9518 - E-mail: themorningnewsaruba@gmail.com

A pioneer of career women on Aruba

Carole Francis celebrates 30 years as the island's first female attorney



Carole officially opening her own law firm

Today is not only a personal celebration for Carole Francis, who began her law career on Aruba 30 years ago with the law firm, Croes & Wever, but all women on the island who aspire to careers in male-oriented professions. Though Carole remained the only woman attorney on Aruba for the first 5 years, among 10 practicing lawyers on the island, she affirms there are now well over 100 active attorneys, of which 50% are women. They can thank Carole for being the individual who paved the way.

Carole was born and raised in Curacao, where her father, James, originally from St. Kitts, kept telling her from a young age she would be a lawyer. This was quite progressive thinking for an island man at that time, but Carole describes him as "a person who valued education above all other things, and always encouraged us to take ours as far as possible."

Carole met her Aruban husband, Roly Sint Jago, while attending university in Leiden, in Holland. She managed to give birth to her two sons, Ahmadu and Ibrahim, while still completing her studies, and returned to her homeland to attain a law degree from the University of the Netherlands Antilles. During her final year, she performed her internship with Croes & Wever, who recognized her abilities and strong work ethic, so she easily acquired her first legal position.

Carole's gender attracted many women clients needing an attorney to handle their divorce, and she admits to becoming something of a champion for them and their rights during this difficult time. "I could say I built my practice on this, and became known as a divorce lawyer during my



Carole in her robes in her law library

early years."

Carole opened her own offices on the Emanstraat in 1986, where she can still be found every day. She has appeared in the courts of every one of the islands of the Netherlands Antilles, practicing every sort of law, with the exception of Saba. She has handled Criminal, Labor, Real Estate and Litigation on five islands, and in 1992, after many requests and much encouragement by clients from Bonaire, she opened offices there, which has her traveling back and forth few days every month.

The years brought great success in Carole's career and a daughter, Nailah-Conchita, who is now studying medicine

in Holland. She looks back on her life with pride and a touch of regret that her work demanded so much of her time, which was taken away from family. However, she is very proud of her children who have pursued advanced educations and exciting careers. Her daughter flew in from Holland for a surprise visit for this special occasion, so the bonds between mother and children are strong.

"It isn't easy for any woman who is a practicing attorney regarding family, it takes a toll. You must become very organized and a master at time management." Carole advises young women interested in the law.

Continued on page 5

A pioneer of career women on Aruba

Continued from page 1



Carole with her 3 children



Carole's 25th anniversary celebration



A young Carole heads for university in Holland

"You are also a life-long student, keeping up with changes in the civil and criminal codes; you must be flexible and always renewing your knowledge and you must have a passion for the law. It must be not only your vocation, but your avocation; you have to wake up every morning with great anticipation of going to

work. I suppose that is true of any profession, but I believe especially as a lawyer, you cannot do your job as well as you should without that passion."

Carole also preaches empathy for the clients is very important. "This is the sort of work where you must understand that each day you are going to be hearing people's problems, because this is why they are coming to you. No matter how incidental their problem may seem, or how many times you have heard something similar, to them it is particular, and all-important. You must be sympathetic and patient; this is all part of being a successful attorney."

THE MORNING NEWS congratulates Carol A. Francis on her distinguished career, an example for all aspiring young career women of the region.

by Rosalie Klein